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The Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Service Delivery

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ABSTRACT

In this paper the authors determine the influence of emotional intelligence in service delivery. The independent variables social skills, self-awareness, social awareness and self-management are analyzed to determine their influence on service delivery. Ex post facto research design was used. The results of the paper indicated social skills, self-awareness, social awareness and self-management has an influence on service delivery. The paper recommends training targeted at the development of emotional intelligence of employees in organizations, knowledge, skills and personality orientation.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Self Management, Self Awareness, Social Awareness, Social Skills*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Reference [1] pointed out that it is perilous to ignore an employee outburst, since emotions are a means of communication and it is a function of the brain, for they operate from the start to signal important changes in the person and the environment, the world around an individual and are fundamental to emotional influence.

Reference [2] argued that the word “intelligence” did not appear in books before the twentieth century and the term “intelligence” was not common until after 1930s. Reference [3] argued that intelligence is an abstract construct based on the tenet that mental activity of some sort precedes all physical behavior. He went further and argued that in common with other constructs, it is plagued by our inability to see mental activity directly, and so the only indication of intelligence is observable behavior. In a broad sense, intelligence is revealed by adaptation to environment and since humans are the most adaptable species in the animal kingdom, it is generally accepted we are the most intelligent animals of all. Reference [4], on its part defined intelligence as an innate, general, cognitive ability, which can only manifests itself emotionally. Reference [1] argued that there is a general factor of intelligence which enters into all functioning of the intellect and influences the performance of all tasks, and is normally manifested in emotions, which they argued that it has three important and overlapping components, namely, behavior, cognition, and physiology. They further argued that emotions have direct and drastic impact in our functioning, specifically, the emotion of anger seems to directly affect, in a negative way, heart function and it may contribute to the physical disorder of cardiovascular disease. Emotions play a central role in disorders, such as mood disorders which may in a negative way affect employee performance and service delivery through displaced emotions.

The notion of emotional intelligence was first defined by reference [5], who argued that it involves the capacity to perceive emotions, integrate emotions in thought, understand emotions and manage emotions

effectively. Reference [6] popularized the concept and he defined it as “the capacity for recognizing own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, for managing emotions well in ourselves as well as others”. He researched further and identified four components of emotional intelligence as, self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, and social skills.

As in [7] argued that emotional intelligence is the capacity to make effective use of the intellect which is the sum total of the mental functions of understanding, thinking, learning, observing, problem solving and perceptual relationships.

Reference [8] argued that emotional intelligence is a combination of skills and abilities such as self-awareness, self-control, empathy and sensitivity to the feelings of others.

As in [9] argued that emotional intelligence involves recognizing and regulating emotions in ourselves and in others, and it includes self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. According to them, emotional intelligence training teaches people techniques for dealing with emotions in the work place. For example, people who work in customer care service jobs may benefit from training that teaches them to keep their emotions in check when dealing with customers who are upset and angry. For people in many other jobs that create stress, emotional intelligence training can help lower the experience of stress that may even contribute to overall improvement in health.

Reference [5] noted that emotional problems in the work place may be solved by having staff development initiatives in the work place. They argued that most skills can be improved through education, and it is likely that it still holds true for at least some skills related to emotional intelligence which may be impairing or enhancing on service delivery, such customer care, public relations, and attitude change among other variables.

Reference [6] re-defined emotional intelligence as covering self-management, self-awareness, social

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awareness, and social skills, and the above components are covered by typically competency frameworks.

According to [6], it is not enough to have a high IQ (intelligence quotient); emotional intelligence is also required for service delivery. Reference [5] argued that when employee(s) write letter(s) of apology after interpersonal issues, then that is a way of using emotional intelligence to solve work place issues. Empirical study by [4] indicates that there is a positive correlation between leadership skills and emotional intelligence. Reference [8] argued that research has shown a clear link between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership and the quality of individual's social relationships. As in [10] argued that when people in management positions in organizations understand emotional intelligence, they are able to apply the same to intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships thus improving the image of themselves and the rating of their organizations or institutions. He also argued that emotional intelligence in the work place is important in order to foster and enhance the intrapersonal relationships and interpersonal relationships both at individual and corporate levels. Reference [11] argued that emotional intelligence can be measured in a valid and reliable way and it consist of three components, each of which is associated with a number of traits, as follows:

Drivers, consisting of motivation and decisiveness are traits that energize people and give them the motive force to achieve their goals, and he argued that people high in emotional intelligence normally set themselves fairly high goals.

Constrainers, which are conscientiousness, integrity and emotional resilience, are traits that curb the excesses of drivers.

Enablers that are sensitivity, influence, and self-awareness are traits that enable people to perform well and achieve their goals.

Later on from [11] empirical research, found that emotional intelligence scores helps to predict academic dropout rates, ability to cope with severe medical condition, aggressiveness in the work place, suicide attempts and ability to recover from mental illness.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to [8], World over, organizations strives to recruit the best academically and professionally endowed workers, in the hope that they will drive the business agenda of their organizations.

In Africa, if one is not gifted academically and professionally, seldom do they find jobs in the middle and top hierarchy of organizations save for political representations.

Reference [13] argued that in Kenya, the scenario is the same however, overtime the workers are lack a deistical leading to a colossal loss of significant

amount of business due to unobservable factors such as emotional in dispensation of the workers, which may be manifested by lack of courtesy, enthusiasms, lack of self-discipline and negative attitude to mention a few, who despite begging for jobs and even some offering bribes, according transparency international status report 2012, turns out to be not so customer friendly.

According to [15], most customers indicated that they have encountered rude and uncooperative members of staff and even when they complain to the supervisors, nothing much comes from their complaints. This survey was collaborated by global international consumer insight survey of 2011, which indicated that consumers are more concerned or turned away by rude or arrogant workers (employee behaviors) than by organizational products or services. As in [16], found Customer satisfaction surveys globally averages as 90 %. Reference [8] argued that among competencies lacking among employees in developing countries are life skills, social network interactions and self-management, self-discipline among other variables. It is in line with the above scenario in mind that the researcher took an interest to understand why workers, despite a plethora of academic and professional qualifications do not live to the expectations of the consumers/customers and also to understand the role their emotional disposition or lack of and in broader perspective their emotional intelligence plays on service delivery in organizations, since according to [20] one area which is normally overlooked is the emotional aspect of employees, social networks , intra and interpersonal relationships among others, both in employees procurement and administration.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study was to determine the role of emotional intelligence in service delivery.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives:-

- i. To determine the influence of self-management in service delivery.
- ii. To examine the influence of self-awareness in service delivery.
- iii. To determine the influence of social awareness in service delivery.
- iv. To determine the influence of social skills in service delivery.

1.4 Research Questions

The study tried to answer the following questions:-

- i. What is the influence of self-management on service delivery?
- ii. What is the influence of self-awareness influence service delivery?

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- iii. What is the influence of awareness on service delivery?
- iv. What influence of social skills on service delivery?

1.5 Justification of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the role played by emotional intelligence in service delivery in organizations. The study aimed to investigate how managers and employees of organizations use emotional intelligence in their work, understand the significance of emotional intelligence in service delivery and reveal if there are any specific aspects of service delivery that benefit from enhanced or reduced emotional intelligence competencies of worker.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study took the form of a desk research in which in depth theoretical and empirical literature review was done to determine the role of emotional intelligence in service delivery. The analysis was based on previously conducted research from books, published scholarly works, relevant journal articles and internet sources.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study presented two major limitations:

- i. The data collected for this study was mostly secondary data as documented in books, journals, academic papers, newspaper articles and the internet.
- ii. Secondly, it is a content analysis and therefore an empirical study will be required to attest to the accuracy of the findings.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study has the potential to deepen the understanding of the role played by the employees' and managers' emotional intelligence in service delivery, by deeply interrogating emerging aspects such as, self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and social skills.

The study may help the employees to understand how to control and use their emotional intelligence for better service delivery, such as solving intrapersonal and interpersonal emotional problems.

The national and county governments may also use the study findings to restructure the training modules to capture the aspect of enhanced emotional control in the work place, as a way of enhancing service delivery, by designing trainings which enhances employee's emotional intelligence.

The findings of the research may be useful to the government, both national and county governments, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations that may be willing to sponsor further research in this area of study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of relevant literature related to this study and a comparison of the views of different authors on the same was undertaken. The literature review also considered other published works related to the assessment of the role of emotional intelligence in service delivery. Literature was obtained from books, journals, academic papers and from internet sources.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Reference [18] in his theoretical framework, summarized three major models of emotional intelligence, following the footsteps of [6] contributions in the field of emotional intelligence.

2.1.1 Personality models

This model has become the most popular theory of emotional intelligence after [6], study. Under this model, emotional intelligence is viewed as comprising a range of emotional dispositions as well as competencies, from individual traits to a number of learnt capabilities, under this model there are five separate elements of emotional intelligence which are, self-awareness, motivation, self-regulation, empathy and adeptness in relationships.

This theory further, tries to explain traits that predisposes a person to behave in certain ways in a variety of different situations, Costa and reference[19] classified them as the big five, and they observed them as openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

They observed further and made the assumptions that people are consistent in the ways they express their traits hence forming the basis for making predictions about their future behavior. They observed that we all attribute traits to people in an attempt to understand why they behave in the way they do so, as check (1987), explained, this cognitive process gives a sense of order to what might otherwise appear to baseless, uncoordinated behaviors, traits, according to him, may therefore be thought of as classification systems, used by individuals to understand other people's and their own behavior.

This theory identifies a number of types of personality that can be used to categorize people and many form the basis of personality tests, they identified four major preferences of people namely;-
Relating to other people, that is extraversion or introversion.

Gathering information, that is sensing, and dealing with factors that can be objectively verified or intuitive, that is generating information through insight. Using information that perceives, emphasizing logical analysis as the basis for decision making and feelings that is making decisions based on internal values and beliefs.

Making decisions that is perceived through collecting all the relevant information before making a

decision, or judging resolving the issues without waiting for a large quantity of data.

Genetic factors) (hereditary		Cultural factors.
	personality	
Social factors.		Situational factors.

Fig 1: Sources of personality
Source:[3]

2.1.2 Mixed models

This model comprises aspects of personality as well as abilities to perceive emotional intelligence and manage emotions. Reference [12] model included fifteen subscales underpinning five dimensions of an individual emotional quotient. He identified these five dimensions of emotional intelligence as, emotional self-awareness, interpersonal emotions, adaptability, stress management and general mood. From his research, he identified that emotional intelligence scores helps to predict academic dropout, ability to cope with severe medical condition, aggressiveness in the work place, suicide attempts and ability to recover from mental illness.

2.1.3 The Ability model

The ability model views emotional intelligence as comprising a set of cognitive abilities that involve the capacity to identify, reason with, and utilize emotions effectively. This model is made up of four branches and these are:

- i. Ability to perceive emotions effectively
- ii. The ability to integrate emotions to facilitate thought,
- iii. The ability to understand emotions, and
- iv. The ability to manage and regulate emotions.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Miller Study

Reference [17] found that one third of employees covered by their survey had consciously included emotional intelligence type of factors such as interpersonal skills, training on leadership skills, people management skills, and team working in their human resource management frameworks.

2.2.2 Dulezwicz and Higgs study

Reference [11] produced a detailed analysis of how the emotional intelligence elements of self-awareness, emotional management, empathy, relationships, communication and personal styles correspond to competencies such as sensitivity, flexibility, adaptability, resilience, impact, listening, leadership, Persuasiveness, motivating others, synergy, decisiveness, and achievement motivation. They concluded that there distinct associations between competency models and elements of emotional intelligence.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

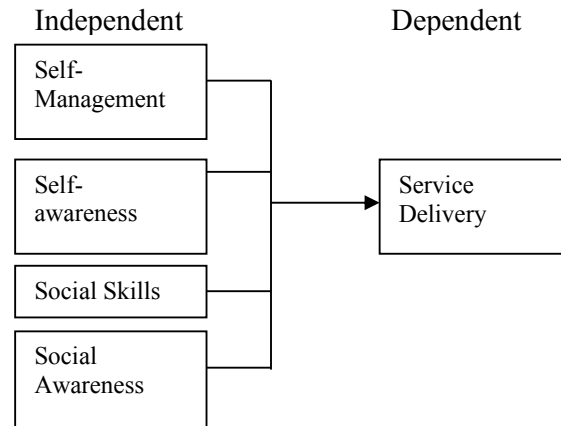


Figure 2

Source (author, 2013).

2.3.1 Self-management

Reference [6] argued that self- management is the ability to control and regulate your behavior coupled with a propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence. Accordingly it has six components associated with it such as: - self- control, trustworthiness and integrity, initiative, adaptability-contort with ambiguity, openness to change and desire to achieve.

2.3.2 Self- awareness

Reference [6] argued that self- awareness is the ability to recognize and understand your moods, emotions and drives as well as their effect on others. According to [8] self- awareness has three competencies associated with it and these are self -confidence, realistic self- assessment, and emotional self –awareness.

2.3.3 Social awareness

Reference [6] argued that social awareness is the ability to understand the emotional make up of other people and skills in treating people according to their emotional reactions. Social skills ha six competencies associated with it, and these are empathy, expertise in building and retraining talent, organizational awareness, cross cultural sensitivity, valuing diversity and service to clients and customers.

2.3.4 Social skills

According to [6] social skills is the proficiency in managing relationships and building networks to get the desired results from others and reach personal goals as well as the ability to find common ground and build support. social skills has five competencies associated with it, and these are leadership, effectiveness in leading change, conflict management, influencing and communication, and expertise in building and leading teams.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research was carried out using ex post facto research and was mainly focused on literature review, secondary data sources and internet research.

4. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The general objective of the study was to determine the influence of emotional intelligence on service delivery. This section presents a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Through literature review, the study revealed a wide range of inter-related findings that connect to the core topic of the role of emotional intelligence in service delivery. Skills such as communication, teamwork, organization, flexibility, curiosity and adaptability are important elements of emotional intelligence and are crucial in service delivery.

Emotional intelligence is of great positive value in intrapersonal and interpersonal relations in enhancing service delivery. Lack of emotional intelligence may lead to loss of morale and a weaker team in general given that general intelligence and education are less reliable in predicting job performance. Employees may exercise emotional intelligence when dealing with angry customers and this may enhance their image and that of their organizations.

Self-management, a key concept in emotional intelligence is a key attribute in service delivery in organizations, for Individuals with a positive emotional intelligence as evidenced by proactive attitude are able to engage with more solid competencies, eventually leading to higher quality interactions through a gradual learning process.

When organizations have employees with the right emotional intelligence they able to deliver services effectively, thus linking employee emotional dispensation to productivity.

Emotional intelligence helps employees to interact with confidence and professionalism with both internal and external customers.

Most organizations who hire emotionally intelligent workers are able to retain loyal customers, improved business and noticeable positive profit levels.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Emotionally intelligent workers in organizations are great assets for they demonstrate competencies such as flexibility, openness, adaptability, adjustment, perseverance, communication and teamwork skills, open mindset to accept new perspectives, among other good attributes of highly desirable workers.

Emotionally stable intelligent workers are able to adjust to different needs of their clientele in organizations and also organizing the workload in a way that a job can be performed remotely.

Although it can be a challenge to attract employees with the required emotional intelligence, practical experience and tacit knowledge, it is possible that training may enhance the above required competencies.

Emotionally intelligent employees support organizations in understanding, adjusting to and communicating with various stakeholders, since organizations depend in one way or another on foreign customers, whose needs and wants set the trend for the development of products and services. The ability of employees to understand the needs of their customers directly affects their success. Hence organizations need to be able to use emotionally intelligent employees to enhance positive interactions with their stakeholders. This requires that employees in these organizations have an understanding of various needs and are ready to step out of their comfort zone to attend to expectations of different stakeholders both internal and external.

Emotional intelligence among employees helps in accelerating quality communication, making exchanges of information smoother, faster and more effective. Likewise, emotional intelligence strengthens relationships among co-workers, hence contributing to a stable team at the workplace and to harmonious internal and external relations.

Lastly, it can be said that the five essential elements that form the basis of emotional intelligence, self-management, social awareness, social skills, self-awareness and empathy contribute to an organization's ability to become more apt in service delivery if exercised positively by workers in organizations.

Emotional intelligence of employees is essential in helping organizations to reach high performance, apt communication and managing its corporate image. Having a firm background in technical skills that a job demands is really important, but emotional intelligence makes a huge difference when it comes to intra and interpersonal engagements.

The ability of employees to use emotional intelligence in organizations to contribute to the organization as a whole and be effective in a team is of great significance to the overall effectiveness of an organization in the delivery of its mandate.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

There should be training targeted at the development of emotional intelligence of employees in organizations, knowledge, skills and personality orientation as these are learned phenomena.

Emotional intelligence helps employees to practice Openness and is receptive to new ideas among the attributes that can facilitate the development of effective teams in organizations.

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Communication is very important in creating clarity around team goals and responsibilities as lack of it may lead to an ineffective team and to draining resources since it contributes to effective and appropriate interactions between workers with varied levels of emotional intelligence.

There is need to train supervisors and line managers in basic psychology for them to be able to understand and interpret the emotional dispensation of the employees under their jurisdiction, since understanding the employees emotional intelligence is crucial to helping workers whether individual or as teams to adapt to working in an environment where expectations are high.

Areas for Further Study

- i. Emotional intelligence of managers as a factor that influences management styles in organizations.
- ii. An assessment of emotional intelligence of workers and its relationship to organization's performance.
- iii. An assessment of emotional intelligence of workers in national and county governments.
- iv. An assessment of emotional intelligence of workers in non-governmental organizations.
- v. An assessment of employees' emotional intelligence in blue chip companies.

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